

REMARKS

Applicant appreciates the Examiner's thorough consideration provided the present application. Claims 1-6, 9, 11 and 12 are now present in the application. Claims 1, 9, 11 and 12 have been amended. Claims 7, 8, 10 and 13 have been cancelled. Claims 1 and 9 are independent. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that dependent claims 9-12 would be allowable if rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant greatly appreciates the indication of allowable subject matter by the Examiner.

By the present amendment, independent claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of allowable dependent claim 10 and the intervening claim 7, which were indicated by the Examiner as including allowable subject matter. Accordingly, it is believed that claim 1 and its dependent claims are in condition for allowance.

In addition, claim 9 has been rewritten in independent form to include the subject matter of its base claim 1 and the intervening claim 7, which were indicated by the Examiner as including allowable subject matter. Accordingly, it is believed that claim 9 is in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-8 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Arai et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,6317,405 (hereinafter "Arai"), in view of Applicant's Disclosure in FIGs. 1-2. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A complete discussion of the Examiner's rejection is set forth in the Office Action, and is not being repeated here.

As mentioned, since claim 13 has been cancelled and claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of allowable claim 10 and the intervening claim 7, Applicant respectfully submits that this rejection has been obviated and/or rendered moot. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103 are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

All the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed and/or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently pending rejections and that they be withdrawn.

It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the Office Action, and that as such, the Examiner is respectfully requested to send the application to Issue.

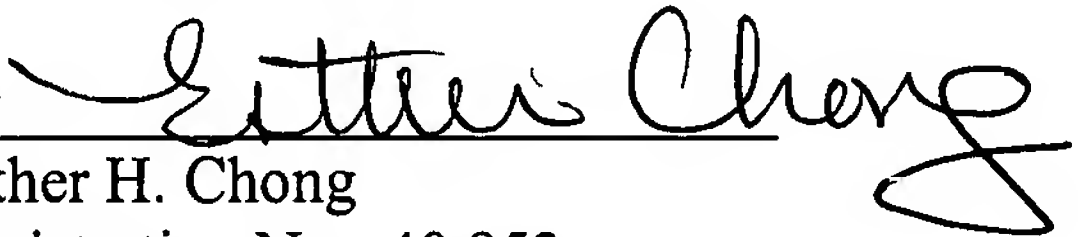
In the event there are any matters remaining in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), Applicant respectfully petitions for a three (3) month extension of time for filing a response in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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